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NEWS

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NLM Announces Network Reconfiguration

The Board of Regents of the National Library of Medicine, at its October 29-30 meeting, approved a proposed reconfiguration of the Regional Medical Library (RML) Network. Beginning in November 1982, the present eleven regions will be reduced to seven. This is the first major change in geographical boundaries in the network's 14-year history.

The change will be effected by merging the five Eastern seaboard regions into two larger groupings and combining two existing regions in the Midwest. The midcontinental, northwestern, southwestern, and southcentral regions remain unchanged.

The new configuration is designed to take advantage of the strong working relationships and programs developed in the regions over the past 14 years, while providing a more cost-effective mechanism to meet current and anticipated budget constraints.

Background

Originally, the impetus for the RML Program came from the post-World War II commitment to ensure better health for the American people. By the early sixties the resulting surge in biomedical research, medical education, and clinical practice had overwhelmed the ability of existing resources to communicate new scientific knowledge. In 1964 members of the President's Commission on Heart Disease, Cancer and Stroke called attention to this serious problem in a report, "A Program for Developing Medical Libraries." The report stated that health professionals had urgent needs for ready access to medical information, but that medical libraries were too poorly supported to meet these needs. Without an effective medical library network, research efforts were unnecessarily duplicated and advances in medical knowledge were not applied to patient care.

To foster cooperation and avoid wasteful competition, the Commission called for NLM to take the lead in developing a national network of medical library services. Their recommendation was incorporated in the Medical Library Assistance Act of 1965 which authorized the Regional Medical Library Program.

In the 16 years since the Act, an effective biomedical communications network has been created consisting of NLM, eleven Regional Medical Libraries, over 100 resource libraries (usually academic health science libraries), and some 3000 basic unit libraries in hospitals and other health-related institutions.

RML Focus

The RML effort has focused on programs designed to meet most of the information needs

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NATIONAL LIBRARY of MEDICINE
NEWS

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of health professionals wherever they are located. Accomplishments include development of a national document delivery system which in 1980 provided health professionals with an estimated two million documents. A National Biomedical Holdings Database of the RMLs, resource libraries, and other library collections in the network is nearing completion and will further improve interlibrary loan service.

RML staff have aided in the establishment of health science libraries, encouraged the development of consortia, and assisted libraries in the network to improve collections and services. The RMLs also offer annual updates for searchers in the over 1,600 institutions with online access to NLM databases, supply information to potential users, and answer questions about technical or searching problems.

The first Regional Medical Library in the network, the Countway Library at Harvard University, was selected in 1967. In the next three years medical libraries at the University of Washington, Wayne State University, University of California at Los Angeles, Emory University, University of Texas at Dallas, the University of Nebraska, the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, the John Crerar Library, and the New York Academy of Medicine became Regional Medical Libraries. Services in the eleventh region, the Mid-Atlantic, have been coordinated by NLM.

Although the network structure was never intended to be rigid, it has remained essentially the same. Three changes have been made in geographical boundaries when a state moved from one region to another and the site of one RML changed during the 1980 contract competition when the University of Illinois was awarded the contract in Region VII replacing the John Crerar Library.

Funding

Since the beginning of the program, the federal government has provided over 33 million dollars in support. During the past seven or eight years the level of funding has remained relatively constant at about three million dollars while program costs have continued to increase. As early as 1972 NLM encouraged cost sharing in the network to provide a broader base of program support and to reduce dependence on central funding.

Anticipated current and future budget constraints provided the primary impetus for reconfiguration. The aim is to provide more cost effective regional groupings while preserving or improving the present level of service to health professionals. Funding for overhead and administrative functions will be reduced. Maximum dollars will be funneled to direct program support. An article in the *NLM News* (August 1981) invited comments from network participants on three issues—reconfiguration, the RML mission, and goals. In addition, a panel of consultants* met at NLM on September 23 to review and comment on draft materials prepared by staff. In recommending changes in present regional boundaries, the consultants concentrated on such issues as cost effectiveness, cooperative service patterns, demographic considerations, and availability of library collections and other potential resources. These parallel closely the considerations used to develop the original regions in 1967.

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*__James Hahn__, Director, Learning Services, Veterans Administration; __Nina Matheson__, Assistant Director for Health Information Management Studies, Association of American Medical Colleges; Dr. __William D. Mayer__, President, Eastern Virginia Medical Authority; Dr. __Doris Merritt__, Research Training and Research Resources Officer, Office of Extramural Research and Training, NIH; __Judith Messerle__, Director, Information Services, St. Joseph Hospital, Alton, IL; Dr. __Max Michael__, Executive Director, Jacksonville Hospitals Educational Programs, Inc.; and __Robert Wedgeworth__, Executive Director, American Library Association.

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Revised Mission Statement

In connection with reconfiguration, NLM also reviewed the statement of mission and program goals of the Regional Medical Library Program. The Board approved a revised mission statement that says the RML Program shall:

> "Provide health sciences practitioners, investigators, educators and administrators in the United States with timely, convenient access to health care and biomedical information resources. The Program is coordinated by the National Library of Medicine and carried out through a nationwide network of health-sciences libraries and information centers."

The Board also supported the program's goals which emphasize the provision of information to health professionals, the use of modern technologies to provide this information in a timely, cost-effective manner, and the necessity for cooperation and sharing among health science libraries and information centers.

Request for Proposal to be Issued

A technical plan embodying these goals is now being developed. The plan will form the basis for a Request for Proposal to be issued early in 1982 soliciting contract proposals from institutions wishing to serve as Regional Medical Libraries in the new configuration.

Contracts are expected to be announced for the seven regions in August and September of 1982 with a phased changeover beginning in October. NLM does not plan to serve as a Regional Medical Library, but will continue its role as a backup resource to the network.

Future issues of the *News* will contain additional information about the reconfiguration of the RML network.

Personnel Notes

The Library's Budget Officer, **Frank Poh**, has been detailed to the Office of Management and Budget; **Mark Rotariu**, a new NLM staff member from NIH's Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, has been named Acting Budget Officer. **Stella Graves** is Acting Chief of the Office of Personnel and Management Analysis; **Thomas Reed**, the former Chief, is now with NIH's Clinical Center. Dr. **Thomas Telder**, Chief of NMAC's Education, Training, and Consultation Branch, has relocated to Michigan where he will work in private industry; Dr. **Michael Weisberg** is Acting Branch Chief.

Other staff changes:

Gains

- Gary Letourneau, Computer Specialist, Lister Hill Center
- Barbara Merchant, Program Assistant, National Medical Audiovisual Center
- Carolyn Scarborough, Budget Assistant, Office of Administration

Losses

- George ("Sunny") Brooks, Library Technician Library Operations
- Judith Dworken, Training Clerk, NMAC

The Palpable Osler

The Palpable Osler, a recent production of the Library's National Medical Audiovisual Center, is now available from the Center. The 33-minute, 3/4" videocassette details the life of Sir William Osler, physician, teacher, and major contributor to the humanistic approach to the practice of medicine.

The videocassette can be borrowed from NMAC through your library using an ALA Interlibrary Loan Form. Please include the title and number (WZ 100 VC no. 32 1981) in your request. Send to:

Materials Utilization Branch
National Medical Audiovisual Center
8600 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20209

History of Medicine Division Discontinues Saturday Hours

Budgetary considerations have led to the closing of the HMD Reading Room on Saturdays, effective January 2, 1982. The Library's Main Reading Room will continue its normal 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday schedule.

NLM Director Martin M. Cummings, M.D., presents the annual Director's Award for 1981 to Freida Weise, Temporary Assistant Head of the Reference Section. Dr. Cummings praised Ms. Weise for the "outstanding manner in which you have exemplified the Library's mission of improving the dissemination of biomedical information." Ms. Weise was cited particularly for her recent monograph, *Health Statistics: A Guide to Information Sources*, **which was selected as one of the outstanding academic books of 1980-81. She was also praised for her exemplary professional contributions as an instructor in continuing education courses and as a member of the editorial board of** *Medical Reference Services Quarterly.*

Charles Goldstein, Chief of the Lister Hill Center's Computer Technology Branch, receives the 1981 NLM Regents Award for Scholarship or Technical Achievement from Board Chairman Martha Williams. Mr. Goldstein was honored for his work in the development of the Integrated Library System (ILS), (*News***, September 1981). Ms. Williams termed the ILS "a major research and development achievement which has been demonstrably successful in a prototype operational system and can be expected to reach significant widespread use in the future. Mr. Goldstein has been both the originator and driving force behind this important effort."**

1981 CIM Price Announced

The Superintendent of Documents (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402) has announced an advance order price for the 1981 edition of *Cumulated Index Medicus*. The 14-volume CIM for 1981 is scheduled to appear in April 1982. The price, a $20 increase over the 1980 edition, is $190 (plus an additional $47.50 if mailed to a foreign address). The order number is S/N 017-052-00225-2. *Cumulated Index Medicus* is an annual subject and author cumulation of the references to biomedical journal articles appearing in the monthly *Index Medicus*. See Advance Order Form, page 7.

NLM in the Literature

The following citations were retrieved from the December MEDLARS files. They point to recent articles in which the National Library of Medicine (or its products and services) is discussed.

Guide for the development of nursing libraries. NLN Publ 1981; (41-1857):i-vi, 1-50.

Graham DL, King C, and **Whitney PJ**: Simultaneous remote search. On-line bibliographic library services for practicing physicians. JAMA 1981 Sep 4;246(10):1115-6.

Meinert CL: Terminology—a plea for standardization [editorial]. Controlled Clin Trials 1980 Sep;1(2):97-9

The caption with the picture of the new NLM Associates in last month's *News* failed to identify them properly. They are, from left, John Ulmschneider, Katherine Branch, Kevin Beverly, Susan Hawk, and Karen Kameen.

New Regent Named

HHS Secretary Richard Schweiker recently appointed Shirley Echelman to a four-year term as an NLM Regent. The NLM Board of Regents meets three times a year to oversee Library policy and to review applications for grants. Mrs. Echelman is the Executive Director of the Association of Research Libraries. She received her M.L.S. from Rutgers University. Mrs. Echelman has been Assistant Vice-President and Chief Librarian of New York City's Chemical Bank (1966-1978), and Executive Director of the Medical Library Association (1979-1981). She has also been President of the Special Libraries Association (1977-1978).

Ernest Allen Retires

Ernest Allen, Sc.D., NLM Associate Director for Extramural Programs, has retired from the Federal service.

Dr. Allen—respected throughout the biomedical community for his experience, dedication, and administrative ability—was honored at the NLM Board of Regents dinner on October 29. In addition to remarks by **John Sherman**, M.D., Vice President of the Association of American Medical Colleges, NLM Director **Martin M. Cummings**, M.D., said: "First, it is a fact that the mechanism for peer-reviewed research grants developed shortly after World War II by the Department and the National Institutes of Health is widely admired and held up as a model of Federal enterprise. Second, it is the universal opinion of those who know about these matters that Ernest Allen, more than any other individual, is responsible for its development and its success."

Before coming to NLM in 1973, Dr. Allen had served the Department for more than three decades in the areas of grants administration policy and public health administration. As Assistant Chief and then Chief of the NIH Division of Research Grants (1946-60), he was responsible for inaugurating the Nation's biomedical research grant program and for charting its long-range development and growth. For this work he accepted the 1953 Lasker Award of the American Public Health Association which cited his "brilliant administrative achievement of immeasurable value to public health."

Dr. Allen continued his work in the PHS as Associate Director of NIH (1960-1963) and as Director of the PHS Office of Extramural Programs (1966-1969). He was Deputy Assistant Secretary for Grant Administration Policy in the Office of the Assistant Secretary, Comptroller, DHEW, from 1970-1973.

Arthur Broering has been appointed Acting NLM Associate Director for Extramural Programs.

New Literature Searches

Five new titles in the 1981 series of NLM Literature Searches are now available from the Library's Reference Section. Literature Searches are printed bibliographies produced through MEDLINE on subjects of current interest. They are available without charge. (A complete list of titles appears in each issue of *Index Medicus* and *Abridged Index Medicus*.) When requesting Literature Searches, please include title and number, enclose a self-addressed gummed label, and mail to:

Literature Search Program
Reference Section
National Library of Medicine
Bethesda, MD 20209

LS 81-18 *Psychologic aspects of cancer.* January 1978 through July 1981. 424 citations in English.

LS 81-19 *Epidermolysis bullosa.* January 1975 through September 1981. 218 citations.

LS 81-20 *Computed tomographic scanning of the brain.* January 1978 through September 1981. 660 citations in English.

LS 81-21 *The aging heart.* January 1979 through September 1981. 267 citations.

LS 81-22 *Adverse reactions to radiographic contrast media.* January 1979 through October 1981. 339 citations.

ILL Announcement

Because of the Christmas mail rush, loan of books from the National Library of Medicine will be suspended from November 30, 1981 to January 1, 1982. For books which would be due between those dates, the loan period will be extended and books will be due back at the National Library of Medicine no later than January 4, 1982.

Requests for books received during this period will be held until service is resumed.

Loans normally supplied in the form of photoduplicates will be sent as usual throughout the period.

We ask also that all books now overdue be returned promptly.

Serial Gap List

NLM regularly solicits the help of the medical library community in filling gaps in its serial collections. If you can provide any of these items we would be most grateful. Please address them to:

National Library of Medicine
TSD-GAPS
Bethesda, Maryland 20209

Current Topics in Membranes and Transport Vol. 10: 1978

Dental Abstracts 21: 1, 12, 1976

Human Biology 36: 4, 1964

Illinois Dental Journal 44: 1, 1975; 46: 6, 12, 1977; 48: 1, 2, 4, 1979

International Journal of the Addictions 1: 1-4, 1966

International Journal of Family Therapy 1: 1, 1979

Nebraska Medical Journal 60: 10, 1975; 63: 1, 2, 11; 64: 1, 2, 1979

Pediatrics in Review 1: 3-6, 1979; 1: 7, 8, 10, 1980; 2: 3-6, 1980; 2: 7-10, 1981

Progress in Cardiovascular Diseases 12: 5, 6, 1970

Scientific Publication—Pan American Health Organization Nos. 197, 200, 202, 203, 206, 209, 210, 212-215, 1970; Nos. 221, 224, 229, 230, 1971; Nos. 232, 233, 197-; Nos. 241, 242, 244-246, 249, 250, 252, 1972; Nos. 255, 259-261, 197-; Nos. 264, 267, 269, 1973

Substance and Alcohol Actions/Misuse 1: 1, 3, 1980

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20402

1981 CUMULATED INDEX MEDICUS, VOL. 22 (14 Books) ADVANCE ORDER FORM

PLEASE NOTE: SETS TO BE SHIPPED ABOUT APRIL 1982

Prepared by the National Library of Medicine (National Institutes of Health, DHHS), *Cumulated Index Medicus* is an annual compilation of citations to journal articles and chapters in selected monographs from the world's biomedical literature indexed in the monthly *Index Medicus*. The citations within *CIM* are arranged by author and subject; *CIM* also includes Bibliography of Medical Reviews, Medical Subjects Headings, and List of Journals Indexed. The 1981 CIM will contain over 240,000 entries.

A price has been established in advance of publication to allow early processing of orders. NOTE: The address to which orders should be sent is: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. G.P.O., Washington, D.C. 20402.

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